

Surf Pines Breeze

Newsletter of the Surf Pines Association

January 2012 Vol. XVIII, No. 2

President's Comments



by Brian Radditz



What a great time of year to live in Surf Pines. The change of seasons is dramatic and sensational. The occasional wind events are followed by frosty mornings and crisp clear skies. Have you all noticed how many more elk move into our neighborhood during hunting season? They know a good thing when they see it.

Surf Pines business is proceeding as predicted with some minor bumps in the plan. In November the board was notified by Clark Powers that he was resigning due to personal reasons that would require him to be away from Surf Pines for an extended period of time. At our November board meeting we heard from members interested in finishing Clark's term and asked them to furnish personal bios. Later that month, we elected via email vote, Russ Keizer to the vacant board position. Congrats to Russ and thanks to Clark for his service to not only the Board but also the Vacation Rental committee.

By now I am sure most of you have seen the landscape transformations at the security house, meeting house and south gate. Although the project came in a little over budget due to an authorized change order, I believe the new visual adds higher value to all of our properties. A special thank you to Norma Keever for being the champion on that project.

I met with Russ and Steve Earl on the 28th of November at their request. They informed me they were negotiating to obtain financing to develop their property that borders Hwy. 101 and Surf Pines Lane. The scope of this development would include Polo Ridge Estates and would be accessed from Hwy. 101. Hopefully, they will get their financing so the access on Surf Pines Lane will be moot.

Please pay close attention to the articles submitted by Don Kruger, Susan Holloway and Patrick Wingard in this edition of the *Breeze*. The committee system for Surf Pines Homeowners Association is working well and they all deserve our thanks. Jeff Hall is a slave driver, when it comes to communicating with substance to our members through the *Breeze*, keep it up and thanks Jeff. My best wishes for a safe and cozy winter.



**Real Estate**

by Karen Radditz

Real Estate sales have improved slightly in 2011 over 2010 by 13 sales county wide. There are currently 512 homes for sale and 352 land listings county wide. As you can see by the chart below the average sales price has dropped from \$278,000 to \$212,000 in a year, which basically shows that our property values are on the decline. This is unfortunate for all of us, as the prediction of foreclosures reaching record numbers in 2012 is looming. The bright spot in the market is that interest rates are at an all-time low. FHA has raised their lending limit to \$418,000 and broadened the acceptable qualifications for loans. USDA is still giving rural loans at a borrowing amount of 97% which means that purchasers only have to come up with 3% down. These rates should help get some action in the market. Supply is big but demand is low. However, it is a great time to purchase a home as an investment or to help a family member become a home owner.

Surf Pines currently has:
11 Active Residential Listings, 2 Pending sales
1 Lease Option, 15 Vacant Land Listings

Total Sold in SP in 2011; 3 homes and 1 lot

Clatsop County Year-end Real Estate Summary Statistics

	Dec-11	Dec-10	% Chg	2011 YTD	2010 YTD	% Chg
Absorption Rate (Months of Inventory based on sales)	19.72	18.95	4.06	19.17	19.7	-2.69
Average List Price	\$406,606	\$387,286	4.99	\$354,613	\$373,150	-4.97
Median List Price	\$299,700	\$279,925	7.06	\$262,000	\$274,900	-4.69
Average Sale Price	\$212,953	\$278,099	-23.43	\$248,846	\$283,990	-12.38
Median Sale Price	\$192,000	\$235,000	-18.30	\$207,000	\$226,900	-8.77
Average ADOM	164	208	-21.15	188	201	-6.47
Agent Days on Market						

Security Corner

by John and Carol Gates

Sometimes I think we could print the same Security Corner every month. The few items that plague Surf Pines every month are pretty much the same.

Speeding: With fall and reduced traffic speeding continues to be the number one problem in Surf Pines.

Dogs: I have received several calls about dogs barking at night. I also get reports about loose dogs roaming the streets. And people please, please, please, clean-up after your dogs!

Gate Codes: Gene Keever and I are constantly removing and reissuing new codes to members who give their personal codes to service people and contractors. Please use the codes on the card that is included with this mailing.

False Alarms: False alarms are truly a nuisance as they are usually in the middle of the night.

For the most part Surf Pines continues to be a safe and secure place to live, let's keep it that way.

Thank you to all the volunteers that help to make my job easier.

Have a safe and happy New Year.

Why No Monthly Meetings?

For many years, the board of directors of the Surf Pines Association met monthly in meetings open to the membership. At these meetings, the board welcomed comments from members and conducted the business of the association transparently in public.

Now, instead of meeting monthly, the current board of directors meets only occasionally. Why? Does the board prefer to minimize comments from members? Does the board prefer to conduct the business of the association privately via email instead of transparently in public?

If the business of the association includes, for example, spending \$5,500 for a right-of-way survey and indebting the association by borrowing up to \$275,000 to spend on roads, then members are likely to have many comments and the board is likely, in the end, to regret its lack of transparency.

Patrick Kelley
SPA Secretary, 2003–2009

President's Response:

At our first organizational meeting in August, the Surf Pines Board agreed to meet four times this year instead of monthly. The four meetings have been scheduled strategically to provide for meaningful business to be conducted reviewing the first through fourth quarters, planning for the next quarter and provide for our annual budgeting process. We further agreed to meet additional times if needed. All meetings are open to members as described in our by-laws.

We decided to have a director as a voting member on each committee and put a greater onus on the committees to develop and recommend solutions to the Association. All committee meetings are open and transparent to all members.

So far this year the Association business is progressing in an orderly and professional manner and will continue as such for the remainder of this fiscal year.

The SPA Board has no intention to indebt the Association and does not have the authority to do so. Our next board meeting is January 13th, 2012 and as always, all members are welcome to attend.

Brian Radditz, President Surf Pines Association

Vacation Rental Committee

by Susan Holloway



The newly formed, Vacation Rental Standing Committee has worked hard this fall to prioritize and address the primary issues of short-term rentals. The Committee has seven members representing the permanent Surf Pines residents, the part-time residents and the residents who rent their home for vacationers. Our members are Judi Stewart and Dave Butler, permanent residents; Jim Cooper and Ron Calvert, part-time residents; and OT Millsap and Susan Holloway, part-time residents who also rent their homes for vacationers. Russ Keizer is our Board representative.

The Committee's first goal is to create better communications so all visitors to Surf Pines are aware of our local customs and practices to maintain the pleasant, respectful and safe ambience of the neighborhood. We will communicate with owners through written documents, examples of good practices and discussions in person and on the phone. The committee will also handle any rental complaints from Surf Pines residents.

Numerous discussions among committee members and board members equate the information needs for vacation renters and visitors, therefore all materials that we develop for renters will be distributed to the rest of the Surf Pines community to enhance a visit for all guests.

We welcome your suggestions and attendance at our meetings. All meetings are held in the Meeting House, with dates posted on the Surf Pines boards.

Lost and Found

We had leftovers at the Holiday party. Is anyone missing a cute pair of cheese spreaders or a stainless pie server?

Contact Katie at 503-738-5986

by Don Kruger



The Roads & Grounds committee is responsible for advising the Board of Directors concerning the maintenance and improvement of Surf Pines Association roads and properties. Specific areas of responsibility include pavement management; gate maintenance; roadside, path and park maintenance; street lights; and the water control system.

Pavement Management Plan: The committee is currently in the process of developing a comprehensive plan to improve the condition of our roads. Factors under consideration include funding, road design, safety, and speed reduction. By now, you have probably noticed the fiberglass rods being placed along Manion Drive and other streets. These are a result of a contracted survey to determine the actual location of the association rights-of-way. This is the first step in the process to develop our management plan. Please do not remove these poles because doing so will hamper the success of our project.

Annual Tree Trimming and Removal Project: This project began in December and will continue through May 2012. A contractor was employed to remove eight damaged and dangerous trees and trim brush three feet back from the pavement and 14' above road level. This will allow large vehicles such as dump trucks, buses, and moving vans to traverse our roads without causing damage to roadside trees. Subsequent to completion of the contracted work, volunteers will meet on Monday mornings to trim or remove other brush and trees as necessary.

Gate Maintenance and Operation: As a result of John Gates' maintenance efforts, association gates have been operating to near perfection during the recent past. Some changes to the gate boxes have been proposed to improve maintenance access and operation of the gates. Improvements to the visual appeal and protection of the entry pad and gates are also being addressed. It has been proposed to remove the white barrels and replace them with steel bollards, strategically placed to provide maximum protection to the gate system. The overall goal is to enhance the appearance of the entry while providing maximum protection of the gate system and improved maintenance access.

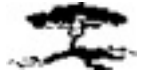
The Roads & Grounds Committee is dedicated to providing sound recommendations to the Board of Directors concerning the safety and security of all residents. If you have concerns or suggestions, please feel free to call and let us know.



Don Kruger, George Hawes, Jeff Hall, Al Beck on storm clean-up; not pictured: Dave Lukens, Norm Tutton, Brian Radditz, John Gates

Mapping High Ground, Roads, Paths, & Trails in Surf Pines

by Patrick Wingard



Happy New Year to all. As we move into 2012, the Board of Directors and its Committees are hard at work on several exciting projects with the overall goal of improving livability and property values within Surf Pines. Over the past decade, I have worked with many boards, commissions and committees throughout Clatsop County. I continue to be impressed by the knowledge, skills, cooperation and collaborative spirit exhibited by Association members, officers and volunteers.

Part of my role as Administrator for Surf Pines is to provide support services for the Board of Directors and its Committees in conducting the various affairs of the Association. To this end, I recently completed a "Routes to High Ground" map that provides detailed elevations for all properties within Surf Pines. This map is available at no cost to Association members at the Surf

Pines Security office located at 33317 Surf Pines Lane. If you have not already picked one up, I encourage you to do so. To obtain an electronic version of this map or to ask questions feel free to call or email me. (*Contact information on back page*)

It is often written that there are no natural disasters only natural hazards. Our preparation and ability to respond to natural hazards helps to determine our safety and comfort following such an event. The scientific community continues to assemble incredible amounts of information from the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami that struck the coast of Japan. In many of these reports, the 40 to 50 foot (12 to 15 meter) elevation range is referenced as the upward limit of the typical wave run-up for the tsunami in Japan. Many factors influence tsunami heights (i.e., strength and location of the preceding undersea earthquake, ocean bathymetry, land topography, etc.) but I was struck by the 40–50 foot reference in these reports and the prevalence of this very same elevation throughout Surf Pines. When one looks at the Surf Pines "Routes to High Ground" map, it becomes apparent that many of our homes are located just below, just above, or right at the 40 to 50 foot elevation mark. If your home happens to be one that lies just below the 40 foot mark, please don't fret. May I suggest that you bake some cookies and deliver a good bottle of wine to one of your "higher" neighbors? While dropping off these goodies, you might just mention that their home would be a very nice place to "ride out the next big storm".

On a somewhat lighter note, another map that is currently being developed for Surf Pines is a Roads, Paths and Trails map. We are fortunate to have such an abundance of natural and scenic resources in and around Surf Pines. As we, and our invited guests, explore these areas, it is important that private property rights be acknowledged and respected. I am developing the Roads, Paths and Trails map, in large part, to ensure that all residents and visitors understand how to appropriately access ocean beaches, lakes, creeks and wetlands, and all areas in-between, without infringing on others' rights to privacy and personal property protection. Look for this map to be published later this month and be made available to Association members at no cost at the Surf Pines Security office.

I wish everyone a happy, healthy and prosperous 2012.

Community, Community, Community....



Happy New Year To All

by Katie Weber

The Community Relations Committee would like to wish you all a Happy New Year and to thank you for a successful 2011 season.

We ended our year with a wonderful Holiday Party at Bonny Groshong's home. There were around sixty guests with plenty of great food. Thank you Bonny for opening your warm and friendly home to all of us. Several of you asked about recipes for foods supplied. If you are interested in an item, you can contact the CRC ladies and we'll do what we can to find the recipe and get back to you.



Lu Thornton, Katie Weber, Bonny Groshong, Norma Kever, Bonnie Rogie

The year 2011 was also a successful year for get togethers. We had our ever popular Garage Sale and July 4th picnic. Then we had a very important and

informational Tsunami evacuation wine tasting in the fall. It's been suggested that we have more informational gatherings throughout this coming year. What a great idea. If you have a suggestion for a topic you think the association would be interested in, please contact the Community Relations Committee or your board of directors who will pass this information on to us.



Russell Keizer, Susan Holloway, Charlie Rule

our jobs would be much more difficult. A special thank you to John and Carol Gates for their help and support and going beyond their normal duties to move all our party prep and equipment around the neighborhood. If you have a chance, stop and thank them yourself or just wave as they drive by.

Lastly, we're looking for hosts for any of our upcoming informational gatherings and the Holiday Party in December. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the CRC ladies.

(Contact information on back page)

Have a great 2012 and we'll see you soon.



Sally Allegaert, Ethel Tutton, Linda Keizer



Mary Schlunegger, Donna Snyder



George and Kathy Hawes

Nature Watch

by Greg Hutzell, Member Resident

Several times a year, I spy fisherman either passing by our dock in their small boat or working the shallows with repeated casts, I always ask, if possible, "did you catch anything?" Remarkably, they all provide the same answer, "nope;" which I then follow with my second question, "what do you expect to catch?" To which I get two answers, bass or trout. Now I admit these conversations are few, so may not be representative of what other fisherman on the lake experience. Nevertheless, the consistency of their responses does lead to me to wonder just how rich is the fish life in Sunset Lake?

I suppose the Department of Fish and Game has some idea how to answer that question, but from my vantage point viewing the lake, I wonder if the question can potentially be answered through simply observing the variety of winged fisherman we have regularly trolling the lake for their finned sustenance.

We can cluster these feathered anglers into two groups, the divers and the snatchers. For this article I'll focus on the divers. The common divers I've observed numerous times on the lake especially during the winter months include the Hooded and Common Merganser, Bufflehead, Pied-Billed and Western Grebe, and Double-Crested Cormorant. As for the snatchers, the year around residents would be the Blue Heron and Belted-Kingfisher; with the seasonal visitations by Osprey and Bald Eagles. It is also worth noting we have one mammal, the River Otter, which actively fishes the lake. On many occasions I've seen two and even as many as five together along the shore line tussling over results of their underwater fishing prowess.



The divers form an interesting group of birds because of their variety of size, feather colors and patterns, and behavior. For my money, for distinctive plumage, the male Hooded Merganser is stunning. About half the size of a Mallard, the bird's head is a large black wedge or crest, accented with a smaller white wedge, swept to the back of its head as if styled by a Hollywood salon. A piercing small golden eye lies directly behind a needle like black bill tipped by a small hook. The female of the species is adorned with the swept back head feathers as well, but rather than black and white, it various shades of rust and brown. These are active fishers not usually seen in flocks, but more typically in pairs or sometimes in groupings of two to four pairs.

The Mergansers as a group of water fowl share the swept back head feathers. The Common Merganser is about the size of a Mallard. The female has the distinctive rust crest and gray body, and the male is boldly different with a dark green-black head, white body below, and black back accents. Both the male and female have a thick long spike liked red-orange beak.

(continued in next issue)



We have been blessed with a sunny and not-so-cold fall, but beware the threat of freezing weather. December of 2009 was not so mild and pipes froze and leaked causing several thousand dollars in damage. Don't get caught unaware. Freezing temperatures are like gravity in that it doesn't care, no second chances.

- *Disconnect hoses from faucets*
- *Keep thermostats set no lower than 50°F*
- *Monitor unoccupied homes*
- *Update contact information with SP security*
- *Keep five digit address visible from street.*



Surf Pines Association

Board

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